[NEW SERIES.]
Vol. 3. *Price, 10 Cents. Per Annum, $3.* No. 19.

[Whole No. 332.]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1875.

Subject: Things of the Spirit.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

NEW YORK:
J. B. FORD & COMPANY,
(27 PARK PLACE, AND 24 & 26 MURRAY STREET,)
1875.

AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY, AGENTS FOR THE TRADE.
European Agents: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Crown Buildings.
188 Fleet Street, London. Sold by all Carriers and News Dealers.

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THINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 PETER i., 2-11.

Here, then, is a theological school, and these are the topics of the lectures to be delivered to those who sit in this school; and it is a matter of more than curiosity to know what it is that the apostle in this passage sums up as the cycle of knowledge. We know very well what is the curriculum in our theological schools to-day. We know that men are taught of the existence and the attributes of God; of a revelation from him of the Old and New Testaments; of the character of God as disclosed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; of the divinity of Christ; of the depravity of men; of the possibility and the need of regeneration; of the passion and death of Christ as an atonement by which men are forgiven and saved; of a life of sanctification; of a

SUNDAY MORNING, Jan. 17, 1875. LESSON: 1 Peter i. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 194, 1272, 1270.

triumphant and glorious immortality to the righteous; and of a dark death and future punishment to the wicked.

Now, in this round of discussion which goes on in our theological seminaries, and which has been embodied in vast tomes of divinity, we have what may be called the Greek idea of Christianity; that is to say, it is religion turned into an intellectual form—presented in its intellectual developments and connections. It is presented, in every element of it, either as a fact or as an idea; and these are connected so that their relations one to another are shown. But the whole system as it is laid down in bodies of divinity, and as it is taught in schools of theology, is Græcized Christianity.

The question then returns, Was this the method in which the Saviour taught? Did he undertake to unfold to the intellectual and philosophical sense the whole nature of man and of moral government, and the whole theory of duty and of life? Was this the method of the New Testament? Is it the method of a philosophy founded upon a truer notion of men than that which has prevailed during the past centuries?

There are two great schools of knowledge—what may be called the outward and the inward. We are all well aware, so far as the globe is concerned, and so far as the qualities and quantities of its matter are understood, that we are dependent primarily upon observation, or that part of our reason or intellect which discerns external existence, or external objects and their relationships. When these facts have been collected, we reason upon them, and deduce, as it is said, certain great principles, which principles are themselves the creatures of our intellect. They are simply the statement of the condition of facts, or of the class in which facts are found.

No man ought to undervalue philosophy, dealing in its own sphere with its own subjects, and dealing correctly; and when the apostle, in his writings to the Corinthian Church and to the Greek Church, who were brought up to the highest degree in the schools of the sophists and intellectualists, seems to undervalue philosophy, it is philosophy "falsely so called," it is the assumption of reasoning about things to

which the reason as it was then used does not apply, that he referred. If a man reflects for a single moment, he will see that there is a large other sphere into which no man's eye can see, which no man's ear can hear, which no one of the senses can appreciate. He will perceive that there are truths which may exist external to him, and which have not developed themselves in any visible form, or in any way in which he can by the speculative intellect discern them.

For example, if a man presents to me a picture, I see the frame, the canvas, and the whole grouping; but there exists in me corresponding to that picture a state of enthusiasm, an exquisite sense of beauty, that is personal to me, and that does not exist in the picture. The picture is the occasion of developing in me certain facts. There is a certain fact in it, and there are states of mind in me that are just as much facts as the picture itself is a fact; but they are of a different kind. They are emotions, and they are emotions that are classed under the general head of the esthetic or beauty-perceiving qualities of the mind. Now, when you come to take these out, I ask you, Is the sense that I have of color, or is my rapture in it, my joy in it, a fact, or is it not a fact? My sense of the pleasure that I derive from harmony of grouping, and from form and color together—is that response in me a fact? It comes from, that is to say it arises in, the presence of that picture; and is not that state in me which is produced by the picture a mental state? Is not my feeling a fact?

When we see things externally we are apt to say, "O, that is hardpan; now we have got down to something;" but when we rise above matter to the soul, which is nearest like God, which is the blossoming point of animated creation, and it acts, is the soul-action less than the matter-action? Is the inside man less a reality than the exterior world which the outside man discerns?

Are there not, then, facts of lower physical organization or consciousness? and are there not facts of higher spiritual organization and soul-consciousness? Are there not facts which address themselves to the imagination, and to that part of the reason which takes cognizance of higher states?

We find that the teaching of theology, to a very large extent, has been an attempt to take men's inward consciousness of those truths which when expressed in words are only expressed by symbols, and to render them into intellectual forms, and then to present those intellectual forms as the truth. This has characterized to a very great degree the theological teaching which has been derived from the Greek mind. I do not disown, nor do I denounce it, nor do I say that it has been useless; but I do say that this mode of representing the truth almost exclusively in a systematic form has led men away from the realities of the Bible, and has been a cause of many of the difficulties which inhere, not in religion, but only in the method by which religion has been interpreted. They have been errors of method, and not of the real substance of religious truth. And I hold that in regard to the dogmas, the schemes, the doctrines of religion, there have been periods in the history of the world in which they were far more useful than they are to-day.

If you will take the passages in the Bible which I have read to you, and similar passages, I think you will see that when the apostles went out to teach, the primary end, the drift, the breadth, the scope and the power of their teaching, lay in this: an attempt to develop in the souls of men certain emotional and moral states; to give them permanence; to create dispositions into character; to build up the inside man according to the highest ideal; and then to let that inside development, the kingdom of God in them, as it is called, be the fruitful source and motive of all their external conduct and actions. They came to men with a very different feeling from that with which the theologians of to-day do. Men are taught to-day to interpret the system of the universe, the nature of God, the nature of moral government, all the great essential facts which involve the most abstruse and abstract of all conceivable elements: but when the apostles came to men they came, not with a vast system, to put men in possession of the intellectual relations of it; they came with a power and a purpose, and with influences by which they meant to stir up the highest elements that were in the human soul, and to bring them into a habit of

action, which habit we call *character;* and out of that character was to flow external life.

So, then, they had a practical design upon the living consciousness of men. Although they used the truths of the nature of God, and of the various developments of religious history in the Hebrew commonwealth, they used these as collateral and as instrumental, and they were all the time thinking of soul-work.

It is very true that if I were to open an architectural school I should teach men what is the nature of bricks, and what are the best kinds of them. I should teach them, also, respecting all sorts of stone—brown stone, sandstone, limestone of various kinds, granites of different sorts, marbles of all descriptions. I should likewise teach them of all manner of timber—oak, pine, hemlock, elm, and others. And I should teach them the nature of metals of every sort—lead, copper, iron, and so on. I should teach them all those elements. But a man might know them all and not be an architect. They are quite necessary, but they are subordinate. They bear about the same relation to architecture that A B C do to literature. A man may know the letters of the alphabet and not be a scholar, a poet or a literary man. These things are all elementary, and are quite necessary; but to know how to build a house which should be convenient within and comely without, and well built, is another matter. Although, to do this, various materials are required, we know that a knowledge of these materials is lower knowledge; and we know that a higher conception in architecture is necessary, in order to erect pleasing and well arranged structures.

Now, the apostles were all the time thinking of the soul-house. "Know ye not that ye are the temples of the living God?" Or, changing the figure, the apostle speaks of men being "rooted." It was a tree that he thought of; but he thought of many other things, and the next thought was of their being "grounded." He had the foundations of a building in his mind. "That ye being rooted and grounded in love." They were to be "edified;" and what is *edify* but a Latin word for build? And all through the

apostle's teaching runs the idea of building men up by the inside.

Now, the truths required for building up men are, of course, to a certain extent, the objective truths which are outside of men; but to a far less extent than men are accustomed to suppose; for, as in this passage, you will see what the Apostle Peter felt to be the essential elements of upbuilding:

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue [in the original it is *by*. It means God's glory and God's virtue]: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."

There is the climax of the truth sought, which is to bring men into that state in which it may be said that they are "partakers of the divine nature."

Then he goes on and adds:

"Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

If Mr. Darwin were a believer, as I am, and were to preach from his system, he would say, "All men are born into this world animals; and their earliest and most powerful developments are the animal passions and appetites; and the grace of religion is to develop a godly element, a higher manhood, out of this lower animalhood." He would say, "That ye may be partakers of the divine nature, grow up, evolve, develop into that." By "lust" in this passage is meant these lower animal appetites and passions.

"And besides this [in addition to this, it is in the original; or as a means of, or in connection with it; as the method of executing this entrance into the divine life, and escaping from the thrall of the animal life on to which the divine is grafted, or on which it grows, as a flower grows out of coarse dirt] giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control [which is the true meaning, or the true interpretation, of the term *temperance*]; and to self-control, patience [not the dogged, stupid patience of the stoic, but that patience which springs out of common sense and trust in God]; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness [not a contemplative and selfish state of mind which separates a man from his kind, and not that feeling of love or

attachment by which one is drawn to his family and to his neighborhood; but that charity which is the universal disposition of good will, or good will in a universal form]; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is taught, then, by the apostle, and it is the implication all the way through, that the main end of preaching the Gospel is to build man up into that state in which his character shall bring him into communion and sympathy with God, so that he shall partake of the divine nature; that this is to be done by the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ; but that the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour is to come through this kind of faith, virtue, self-government, patience, endurance, brotherly love, godliness, charity. In other words, the knowledge of Christ Jesus is to be brought out through certain experimental states in ourselves. And so we are to study and grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This brings us again to the truth that the New Testament claims that its aim and drift is to shape human nature to a higher model, and that this is to be done by the truths of the Gospel, and that these truths are to be understood by being experienced. It is experimental truth that is to build in us the right character; that is to interpret in us the truths of the Bible; that is to make us understand the nature of Christ, and through him the nature of God.

Speculative reason can never determine the truth or falsity of the Gospel of Christ. Mere philosophical reasoning can never determine the truths of the Word of God. There are periods in the history of the world when religion has the go by; when it is not fashionable. We are coming into one of those periods now, in respect to technical and speculative religion. Just such periods have existed in different nations and at different times: and it is a matter very remarkable, too, that when at one period and another the Bible sank into contempt; when the Church became odious, and her officers were suspected and denounced and disliked in every way, and her authority was regarded as intolerable; nay, when what was taught of religion was full of superstition, full of mischief, full of evil, and was overthrown in the confidence of

men,—it is a matter very remarkable that then there was something that carried the Church and the faith of men in the substantial truths of religion through all these revolutions. How does it happen that when the philosophic mind of France, of Germany, and of England has been for periods of half centuries together adverse to the substantial teachings of Christian men, there is a deeper sense of Christianity, and a more profound belief in the reality of religion, to-day, than there ever was at any former period? In a lower sense of the term Christianity may be fashionable, but in a far deeper and more respectable use of that term than is ordinarily implied in it, I say there is nothing to-day that is so fashionable as the deepest moral feelings and moral truths. To-day, the great systems of theology are being shaken. All the claims of hierarchy and church organization are being disputed—and mostly on very good and tenable grounds. One after another of those things which have been considered sacred from generation to generation have been stripped off and thrown down. One after another of the great truths have been analyzed and shown to be more or less false in statement. Much that has entered into the conception of the Divine nature through whole ages has been taken out. The God that Calvin thought of, if he were to be presented to-day in the average of Calvinistic churches, would, I think, be turned from with simple horror. The doctrine of the nature of man, of his sinfulness, and of the desert that follows his sinfulness, is no longer taught or believed as it was centuries ago. There has been a vast change going on, and we have seen a different thought of church organization, of Christian liberty, and of the power and worth of ordinances: we have seen a vast change going on everywhere, which to some men seems like a destruction of religion; but in point of fact there never was so much conscience, there never was so much sense of the worshipful, there never was so much tenderness and charity, there never was so much soul-power evolved in any era as there is to-day.

It is said that in the apostolic ages we had the pattern church and the pattern experiences. Far from it—*far from it.* No subsequent age has produced single characters like

John and Paul; but if you take the average of Christians in the apostolic age and in ours, our Sunday-school scholars could teach many of the early Christians. It is piteous to go back and see what a state they were in—how low they were.

To-day, there is more real soul-power working towards God and eternity than there has been at any other period, I think, in the history of the world. And yet it is a day in which there is more speculation, more assault upon the systems of theology, more disbelief in its ordinances and churches than ever before; and what is the reason of it? The reason is this: that religion does not stand in the thought of religion. Religion is a thing that is in man himself. It is the soul acting in certain relations. It is experimental. First it is experience, and afterwards it is speculative reasoning upon experience; but the beginning and the middle and the end of the kingdom of God in this world is a given condition of imagination, faith, hope, love, self-control, honor, and fidelity, in living forms among men. The kingdom of God is within you. It is the sum of all the higher impulses and nobler emotions and finer characters that exist on the globe in any one church. It is they that represent the divine element in living, glowing forms. That is the truest church of Christ, no matter how many or how few members there may be in it, which represents the most living Christ-likeness. In the world at large there is but one true church, and that is the contribution of all churches to this one great element—*Christ in you the hope of glory.* The "partakers of the Divine nature" are the men and women, ignorant or refined, low or high, who have that patience in sorrow, that hope in despondency, that faith in obscurity, and that love, which bring daylight every day, and strike even night with starlight. That faith which makes a man like God, who, with double hand pours blessings the year round, in all seasons, upon his creatures; that likeness in men to God which makes them bountiful, singing and making song, beautiful and making beauty, joyful and making cheer—children of the light, and almoners of infinite divine treasures,—that is the element which characterizes the true church of Christ. These frag-

ments, wherever you find them, all the world over, constitute the one catholic and universal church. There is not a church organized on the globe which has not constituent elements of this kind; and there is no church so heretical that God does not take something from it, and make a part of the universal church out of it; and there is not a church so pure that he does not have to sift every part of it in order to get the true wheat, leaving the chaff behind.

If these views be correct, I remark, first, that the bodily life of Christ is not Christ; it is the soul-life of Christ that is Christ. He had a bodily life; but he who merely looks upon him in his outward relations; he who regards him speculatingly; he who, in speaking of him, says, "How could he be born of a woman? how could he be God and yet be a babe? how could he be divine, and spend thirty years of his life as a mechanic, toiling, hewing wood, nailing up beams, joining and fitting, working in a carpenter's shop?"—he who does and says these things cannot understand Christ in his real nature. There be those who say, "The life of Christ opened; he went to Galilee, and made his headquarters there, leaving Nazareth upon his persecution at Capernaum; he performed wonderful works, making circuits in villages and communities round about; he traveled from Galilee northward, and pushed his way clear to the borders of Tyre and Sidon; he spent two or three years there, and then he came to Jerusalem." This itinerary of Christ has some relation to Christ; but it does not represent the true Christ, any more than that casket which contains your pearls, your amethysts, your opals, your diamonds, and is the means by which you carry them with you here and there, is the precious stones themselves. It was not Christ that ate, and drank, and slept. That which did these things was the vehicle of his life. That was the Christ who thought; that was the Christ who felt; that was the Christ who loved; that was the Christ who wept; that was the Christ who suffered; that was the Christ who brought down from heaven into the temple doctrines so high that the corrupt imaginations of men could not comprehend them. It is the inward, thinking, loving, living soul of Christ that is Christ.

Now, how are you going to understand Him? Can any catechism teach you?

I go to Italy [it is hundreds of years ago]. I want to become acquainted with Raphael. They take me where he lives, and I look at the house, and am profoundly interested in it. They let me into his studio. I am profoundly interested in that also. I see his work. I examine the pictures which he has painted. I am hidden behind a screen, so that when he comes in, without his seeing me I can see him. I see how his face, his eye, his mouth, all his features look. I watch him as he takes his palette. I see him work. I observe the smile play over his features. And when he has gone out again I go and look at his shoes, and at his painting-gown that hangs upon the wall. I thoroughly acquaint myself with his surroundings. And I say, when I go home, "One thing I know: I have been to Italy, and I know Raphael through and through." I have not spoken with him; I have not followed the line of his thinking; I have not had any correspondence in myself to his inspiration; all that which has made him what he is I did not touch. That which is common to him and every rude peasant in all Italy I know; but that which has made him the commanding genius of painters throughout the ages is just what I lost.

Now, men study Christ's life. He was born in Bethlehem. So were ever so many other persons. But he was born in an inn. Yes, and lots of children have been born in an inn. But he was carried to Nazareth. Yes, and ever so many persons have lived in Nazareth. But he was brought up by his father, who was a carpenter, and he worked at his father's trade. Yes, and hundreds of persons have been brought up by their fathers who were carpenters, and have worked at their father's trade. But he became a distinguished preacher among the Rabbis. Yes, and others have become distinguished preachers among Rabbis. But he lived two years in Galilee. Yes, and many people have lived twice as long, ten times as long as that, in Galilee. But he went to Jerusalem and got into trouble there. Yes, and many men have got into trouble in Jerusalem. But he was put to death for disturbing affairs in the hands of the regular authorities.

Yes, and thousands of men have been put to death for disturbing affairs at the hands of the regular authorities. You know all that, and yet you do not know anything about Christ. It is that which lies back of sensuous perception and back of intellectual analysis, that gives you a knowledge of Christ, and that you can understand only by having a thrill of it in yourself.

Have you ever stood where it was needful for you to give up time and profoundly dear objects of pursuit for others?

I see a kind sister. She is comely. She is deep souled. She has a deformed brother. He has no chance or prospect in life. All pleasures are denied him. All the world will touch him to hurt and irritate his pride. He has a soul, and he has genius. He shall see knowledge. She, comely as she is, says, "I will never marry until my brother is established with every advantage of education;" and for the love she bears him she goes to service, and cheerfully denies herself all ornaments, though they are precious to her. Admiration she will not receive. She devotes herself to her brother, who is so unfortunate, but who yet has a future that may be developed. Night and day, for a score of years, she toils, giving feeling, and enthusiasm, and bodily service, through deprivation and suffering, until he is able to stand before the community and receive that meed of praise which genius gets so easily when it is disclosed. And she meanwhile sickens with over-toil, and faints, and fades.

Take off thy robe, O thou disputer of the divinity of Christ! bow thyself down before the presence of this woman; for she can tell you more than you know of what it means to give one's life a ransom for another. She understands Christ. She has had him in her experience.

Look at another case. See a mother who, though cumbered with poverty and with toil, stands in the midst of a household of ten or twelve children (such I remember), and gives herself for them. There is hardly a single element of human knowledge that is not precious to her. By nature a philosopher, by nature a poet, by nature an artist, with high and noble tendencies, for these children's sake she dwells at home without books, without research, denying the

strong instincts of her being, and finding her happiness in giving her power to them, impleting them, inspiring them, lifting them up, and making them rich by her self-denial and disinterested love. Bow down to her, sharp theologian! This woman is giving her life a ransom for many. Not that I would compare any human creature to God, or to Jesus his divine Son; but in miniature and analogue the experiences of this woman interpret the grandeur of that sacrifice which was in Christ Jesus.

Whoever loves another better than himself in order that he may help him; yea, whoever loves another so that he is willing to lay down his life for him; whoever can stand and take buffet after buffet, and stroke after stroke, with sincere and undisguised sympathy pitying and praying for the wrong-doer, as Christ in the extremity of his torment said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do"—whoever can do that, is learning Christ. He has Christ in him. He has that knowledge which comes, not from reflection, but from experience. When I see men disputing and quarreling about the attributes of Christ and careless about the elements which go to make those attributes; when I see the want of kindness, of truth, of justice, of love, of self-sacrifice; when I see the emptying out of a man's self every one of those qualities which by sympathy and experience teach him of Jesus; when I see men, with dogmatism and arrogance and philosophical nicety, damn one another right and left by texts, and with compressed lips and red cheeks, because they are not orthodox, and do not believe in the divinity of Christ—when I see these things, I am not surprised that many professed Christians do not understand Christ. Could the devil tell what Christ was by anything that he ever felt in himself? and can the spirit of the devil in a man interpret Christ? But when you are in the mood in which Christ lived; when you experience those emotions which ravished his soul; when your mind moves in harmony with his mind, then he becomes apparent to you.

We are called, to-day, to very much discussion in respect to the source of our knowledge of religion—as to whether it is the church or the Bible, these being the two antitheses or

antagonistic fountains. One great part of Christendom derives its authority to teach the truth from a supposed Divine power that is inherent in it. Another derives its power to teach the truth from that which is laid up in the Bible.

Now, the Bible itself, and the church itself, both of them, become objects of suspicion and of doubt. On the one hand the imperfections of the church, and on the other hand the time-element that is in the Bible, give rise to a vast amount of questioning, of distress and of unbelief, in regard to the one and the other; but the test of the truth of the Bible is the reproduction in ourselves of those moral emotions which it enjoins as the ideal of a true life, a true character and a true manhood.

I read with much interest the journal of Marcus Antoninus. Though he was a Roman heathen, he was full of good sense and nobility. He was also full of narrowness and imperfection. Every one of those traits that he manifests which are really large, and which have in them an element of universal manhood, thrills me; but the very next page after the representation of such a trait may contain something which belongs to the narrowness of his education, of his age and his condition. This does not, however, take away from that which is good and true. We judge of things by the whole. That may be a noble steed whose harness has worn off the hair and left an ugly spot on him. That may be a comely person on whom there is a scar—especially one that was received in the day of battle. We measure things according to their essential quality, and not according to their incidents or accidents.

The Word of God is the best thing which, in every age, God could give to men in view of their endowments, their institutions, and their conditions, by which to establish them in manhood. It is a book that he employs in attempting to raise men out of their animal lusts. It is a record of that process by which he endeavors to lift them up from the lower state into the Divine nature. It is, as Paul says to Timothy, "Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that every man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Now, let a man who wants to be a *man* go through the Bible and take out what he pleases; let him reject, if he wants to, Genesis; let him reject, if he pleases, Exodus; let him leave out Leviticus; let him dismiss Numbers, Deuteronomy, I. and II. Samuel, I. and II. Kings, I. and II. Chronicles; let him drop Ezra and Esther; let him, if he pleases, set aside the books clear down, all the way through: but let his soul hunger and thirst after righteousness; let him say, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so thou knowest, O God, that my soul panteth after thee;" let him be a man who searches for wisdom as for silver and gold and for hid treasure; let him be a man to whom a knowledge of that manhood of which he has some glimpses is more valuable than rubies; let him take the Word of God, sifting it all the way to the end, leaving out this thing and that thing; but, after all, when he has got through, if he reaches a high and heroic manhood, he will say, as every other man must under the same circumstances, "That book is worth more to me than all the other books on the globe. All the other books on the globe do not give me such inspiration, such courage, such promises, such ideals, such models, as that book does. No other book awakens in me such emotions as does the Word of God." That is enough.

The mistake that has been made about the Bible is in supposing it to be an immense Cyclopedia, and that it teaches all knowledge on all subjects. This supposition is as absurd as to give a man a chart, and to tell him that it will teach him the chemistry of sea-water, the geography of the bottom of the sea, and a knowledge of all the ethnological subjects which belong to the countries that he shall visit. In regard to the Bible, men have stumbled and fallen by reason of this misapprehension. But if you want to be virtuous; if you want a virtue that is not a sordid and marketable quality, but that is heroic; if you want to know how to go through good report and evil report, and be a cheerful man; if you want to know how to deny the flesh and minister to the soul; if you want to have the life that never ends assured; if you want to feel that you are not simply a mote that moves fluctuated by tides and winds, but that you are a

part of God, and that you stand by his power; if you want to feel that joy is in sorrow, and that sorrow blossoms into joy; if you want courage and fidelity and truth and heroism and everything that lifts men above animals and above common men and makes heroes of them—heroes of the kitchen, heroes of the nursery, heroes of the parlor, heroes in the Senate or in the field,—go to the Word of God. Where else can you find such inspiration, such ideals and such help as you can there? Nowhere; and that is the reason why you will never kill the Bible. It is a vital book. It is a book that sprang out of life, and that always is going back to life: and you may say what you please in disparagement of it; you may seek to invalidate it; you may prove that its dates are false; but no man can prove that it is not a book which brings the strength and food of God to the soul of man in its emergency, in its sorrows, in its defeats, in its overthrows, in its humiliations, and in its aspirations and longings—for, oh! the hardest thing to bear in this world is not loss; it is longing. It is not what I have lost that distresses me, in common with all high-minded men; it is the desire of more knowledge, more virtue, more purity, more disinterestedness, more equability by which to carry myself always and under all circumstances so that I can stand as God stands. It is this aspiration, this infinite longing, that distresses and disturbs the soul, and that causes more suffering than losses, than bankruptcy, than any misfortunes of the lower kind. And in this book you will find that which satisfies this yearning for nobility—for true manhood.

When, therefore, it is said, "Science is going to overthrow the Bible and change many things," I have no question that science is going to change many things, thank God! I have no doubt that it will change a great many things in the church, thank God! I have no doubt that it will change a great many things in the structure, in the administration, and in the philosophy of the church. I have no doubt that it will change things that belonged to certain times in the past, and which were best for those times, but which we have outgrown. We have larger views than the ancients had. They had elements of truth, but not truths in their largest forms. We are

never going to have a science which will show that man is not sinful; but certain dogmas in regard to his sinfulness will be overthrown. We are never going to have a science that will do away with the doctrine of man's responsibility, but that doctrine will be reconstructed. The mode of teaching God's moral government will be organized on a nobler plan when we understand human nature and the Divine nature better. There will be vast changes, but they will never go to the root of religion; for that root is mankind, in their living inner consciousness and experience; and no intellectual scepticism will take away from man that consciousness and experience. Nothing is going to take away the human consciousness and experience of want, of sorrow, of distress or of aspiration.

I look, therefore, with the utmost complacency upon all these things. There is going to be suffering for a great many people. There are many who, when they lose a bit of faith, lose everything. Because the ideas in which they were educated when they were children are shown not to have been exactly correct, they instantly say, "Well, if I have to give these up, how do I know but that I must give up everything else?" This is the complaint of weak minds—and I do not mean it in an obnoxious sense at all. "Receive the weak, but not to doubtful disputations." There are many persons who have not reasoning power; they cannot supply themselves with this power; and so they have to depend on other people, and upon the institutions which are around about them; and there cannot be much growth without a great deal of loss, and suffering, too. This I expect, and bargain for. I do not apprehend, notwithstanding, but that the world in any one hundred years is vastly augmented in its moral treasure. It grows rich in spite of the wastes that are going on. And so I hold that the faith of God as it exists in individual souls, and as it is gathered collectively in great bodies of men who express a given faith, and hope and longing, is not to be extinguished. The intellect cannot discern the things of the spirit. The spirit discerns its own facts. The intellect serves to arrange those facts in certain order, and to put upon them certain names; but so long as there is in man an innate conscience, an innate sense of

purity, an innate longing for that which is divine, innate love, innate charity, innate patience, innate hope and self-denial, and so long as these have, by the watering of God's grace, continual growth and development—so long will religion be in the world; and as long as men betake themselves to the word of God they will find there ideals, food, nourishment, that will make the Bible precious, not on this theory or that, but because it brings light, and joy, and comfort to the soul.

Dear Christian brethren, do not wander away, misled by the intellect, from your faith in truth, in God, and in Christianity. Dearly beloved, understand that while you are not to disown external and physical instruction, if I may so say, while you are to give due weight to the outward history and relations of religion, after all, true Christianity cannot be taught except by developing the spirit of it in yourselves and your children. Do not be moved from your faith by supposing that this or that sweeping current is going to efface anything from this world which the world needs. Nothing will be swept away that is worth keeping. We have passed the barbaric days; and no truth, certainly no dispositions and emotions, nothing that belongs to the inward life of man, will be destroyed. All these things will stand. Therefore abide in the faith of God's love. Abide in the confidence that God loves you, that you may be made better. Abide in the belief that in order to make you better he chastises you. He plies you by business; he swings you through the different schools of infancy, youth, and manhood; he gives you industry and enterprise; he sends you summer and winter; by ten thousand influences, within and without, he seeks to educate you in those qualities which shall make you partakers of the divine spirit. Abide in the faith that though you be weak, though your sins be multitudinous, though your infirmities be more than the sands on the sea-shore, God is the great and bountiful Father; and that though you merit nothing you shall inherit all things, because it is the pleasure of God to make eternal life the *gift*—the gift without equivalent—to every one that can receive.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice, our Father, that we have access to thee. We rejoice that our spirits may rise above the body and above surrounding troubles and rest in thee. Even as from the sea, tossed and driven of storms, the vapors rise and hide themselves in the air far above, to descend again fruitfully and blessedly, so we rise from storm and from tempest into the upper air where thou art; and we return again fruitful and joyful. We thank thee for this ascending power of the soul. We thank thee that there is this refreshment of faith in thee, and that our life day by day is fed from these secret springs —from the dews and from the rains that fall from the heavenly land. We rejoice to record thy bounty in days past—thy goodness that has never forsaken thy servants. Through long ages when cast out and driven from their land, when hiding in the mountains and in the caves, when imprisoned, when led forth to torture and to death, thou hast been present with them. The world was not worthy of them, but they were blessedly sustained by the secret, invisible power of God; and by ministering angels they were made victorious over every ill. That same love which thou hast manifested heretofore dwells undiminished. Thy faith is unwearied and unweariable. Thou art without change or shadow of turning, Thou art the God of the desolate, of the weak, of the tempted, of the oppressed, of the fatherless, of the widow, of those that are persecuted in every age; and we rejoice that there is thus in the midst of selfishness, and pride, and all the distemperature of this ill-regulated life, such a magazine of mercy open and accessible to all; that there is this pavilion where thou dost hide thy people until the storm be overpassed; and that the poorest may come without money and without price wherever they are and how ignorant soever they may be. They that put their trust in thee shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed. We rejoice that although our senses report thee not, that although we find thee not, that although thy voice is not heard in the street, yet thou art everywhere present. The most powerful of all power everywhere art thou present, doing thy work for the secret soul which cannot be done by visible and outward instruments. And thus from day to day when we seek lower ends, we behold what is related to our existence here, we comprehend things that are visible to our senses; but when we rise and are in our finer and nobler moods we drop all these outward and visible instruments, and are conscious that we are strengthened and fed by the invisible; and we rejoice that thus day by day thou art ministering to our faith by ministering to our hidden life.

We pray, O God, that thou wilt grant to all in thy presence the blessing of thine own appearing and of thine indwelling in them. We pray that whatever may be their necessities, that whatever may be the exigencies of their life, they may be conscious of the divine Helper. Be thou Immanuel to all those who are toiling and struggling, who are tempted, and who are variously distressed by trial. We pray that thou wilt be near to those who are suffering from the pangs of hunger, or who are harassed by poverty, or who are in

over measure wrought upon by fear of to-morrow. Be near, we beseech of thee, to all who are distracted in the various duties of their outward life, not knowing what is right and best. We pray that thou wilt bless all who suffer, not so much for themselves as for those who are put beneath their care. Will the Lord be gracious unto all according to their needs. Have compassion upon men's weakness and ignorance, and upon their want of faith, and discernment, and experience in spiritual things. We pray that thou wilt be near to all those who desire above all other things to be the children of light and of truth, and who are afraid on every hand of being misled by superstitions and invalid arguments. We pray, O God, that thou wilt lead them through a better way. Open to them thy will as well as knowledge of thyself; and out of that inward knowledge develop more of the truth as it is outwardly.

Be near, we pray thee, to all those who seek to teach others the way of righteousness; and when they feel their own impoverishment, when it seems to them that they have but little of the truth or of the Spirit, we pray that thou wilt fill their souls, quicken their imaginations, and deepen their affections; and grant that they may be able to preach the Gospel of Christ with all the beauty and sweetness and flavor that come with the truth of God in the human soul.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to all those who are attempting with conscious feebleness, and yet with fidelity, to discharge the duties which are incumbent upon them in life. Wherever they stand, whether it be at the highest point or at the lowest, may they feel that they are serving the Lord. May those who are in subordinate situations, and who owe duties to their fellows, honor all men—not alone those who are worthy of honor. May they seek for Christ's sake to fulfill the obligations of charity and kindness towards those that seem unworthy. May they be filled with the Spirit of Christ, in order that they may carry conviction of his presence wherever they are. May all pride, the swellings thereof, and its corrupt interpretations of life and duty, be taken out of the way. May vanity cease to cast its baleful influence upon the soul. May everyone of us know how to rein in his anger and indignation, and sin not even when angry.

Grant that everyone of us may look with kindness upon all men; and may we seek pity rather than vengeance. May we seek rather to do good to others than to have good done to us. May we seek to strengthen others rather than to be made strong ourselves. May we be willing to follow Jesus Christ—to follow him in his joy, in his teachings, and in his wonderful works; and to follow him, also, in his disputings with men of doubt in the temple, in his passion and humiliation, in Gethsemane, in his buffetings and trials. May it be our ambition to live the life of Christ. Grant that in our several places, as servants, as companions, as parents, as partners, as neighbors in brotherhood, everywhere we may be willing to be toward other men what we believe Jesus Christ would be willing to be toward us.

So may we have evermore not so much controversy as to what

Christ is, and where he is, and what are the limits of his nature. May we desire to know Christ in us, the inspiration of duty, the teaching influence, the restraining power, that we may be built up into him in all things; that we may be rooted and grounded in him; that we may have the fullness of the Godhead made manifest to us.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon this church. Grant that all its history and experience may redound to thine honor and glory. And we pray not only that thou wilt build us up, but that thou wilt build up all thy churches. May we think more and more of the world; more and more of other bodies of Christians. May we not be contracted to a religious selfishness. May we desire to have charity for all, and the large spirit of Jesus Christ, who beholds that the field is the world. May we live for mankind.

Grant, we beseeech of thee, that thy kingdom may come everywhere, and that thy will may be done. May we discern it in the increase of intelligence; in more gentleness, more truth, more justice among men; in the repression of things evil by the exaltation of things that are good.

Be pleased, O God, to remember the President of these United States, and all that are joined with him in authority. Grant them thy wisdom, and strength, and success. We pray that thou wilt remember the Congress assembled, and all State Legislatures, and all courts and magistrates, and all citizens throughout this great domain. May our rulers be God-fearing men who shall faithfully administer the laws and the trusts that are imposed upon them by their fellow citizens. Grant that this great people may fear God, and obey the laws of God.

And not for ourselves alone do we pray, but for all those in other lands who are kin to us, and for all those in other lands who are speaking a different language, and are striving for the same great ends which we are striving for—a larger life and nobler career.

O grant that all those forces that to-day are rising up in the enlightened souls of men, and that are striving against the visible that is in us and under us, may gain the supremacy. May all that which is of God and all that which is angelic prevail, so that more and more customs, and laws, and institutions shall express the amenity of the Gospel, and not the rigor and rudeness of old and barbarous ages.

We pray that thy kingdom may come everywhere, that thy will may everywhere be done, and that the whole earth may be filled with thy glory.

And to the Father, the Son, and Spirit shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

BE pleased, our Father, to breathe into us that childlike spirit by which we shall come into sympathy with thee; by which we shall be able every day to do the things which in our circumstances thou wouldst have us do. We are glad that we live under so large a cope of influences. Thou art not narrow, nor pettish, nor jealous; thou art not a spy of the universe, hunting out every man's transgression, and setting them down against him; thou art a Father; and whatever concerns the welfare of thy children thou dost discern. For their good thou watchest; for their good thou dost chastise. Infinite art thou, dwelling in eternal summer. There where love hath its equator is thy throne, and thence come endless streams of influences that are moving upon the minds of men. Grant that we may come under the divine influence, and rise into the full perception of the divine nature, not in its largeness, not in its power or scope, but in the quality thereof, that we may be in our places as God is in his.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

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